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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

3 December 1952

ESTIMATE OF SOVIET INTENTIONS OVER THE FORTHCOMING DECADE

Note: To bring NIE-78 into line with the discussion in the IAC on December 1 it is proposed that p. 1 of the draft circulated on November 29 be altered as follows; that paragraph 10 be omitted; and that other paragraphs be renumbered to conform with these proposed changes.

PART I

PROJECTION OF PRESENT TRENDS

The World Power Situation

1. We believe the odds are less than even, that if present trends continue, global war can be averted for another decade. The cold war will soon enter its eighth year. The armaments race is intense. Ideological differences and the Iron Curtain prevent both normal diplomatic negotiation and any contact between the peoples of the Bloc and of the West. There is widespread fear of a war fought with atomic weapons, but similar fears have existed before, and they have not prevented war.

2. At best, the existing hostility between the Soviet Bloc and the Western nations headed by the US will almost certainly continue.

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The rulers of the USSR assume that capitalism and communism cannot continue to co-exist indefinitely, and that a peaceful settlement between the Bloc and the West is impossible. The Communists accept the possibility of periods of stalemate, or even of periods when retreat becomes a tactical necessity for communism. But it would be unsafe to assume that even the most cynical communist would accept a general

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